



News

Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, Office of Communications
222 W. 7th Avenue #13, Anchorage AK 99513-7599
Tel: 907-271-5555 Fax: 907-271-5421

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Edward Bovy, (907) 271-3318

News Release No. AK-05-28
Date: Sept. 20, 2005

Alaska miner wins national award

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recognized Alaska miner “Diamond Jim” Olmstead with the agency’s 2005 National Sustainable Mineral Development Award in the Small Operator Category.

The awards recognize the efforts of individuals and companies in implementing the principles of sustainable development, a concept adopted by the United States and 192 other countries to balance environmental, economic and social considerations in planning for mining operations.

Olmstead has been mining gold on Gold Creek, 200 miles up the Dalton Highway, since 1996 where his one-person summer operation has progressed from a suction dredge to a small Case 450 tractor. The award recognizes his conscientious and timely reclamation that has maintained a stable channel and flood plain on the creek. Disturbances are limited to about one acre a year. Local BLM staff at BLM’s Fairbanks District Office are particularly impressed with the way Olmstead replicates the original stream channel, matching existing grade and channel widths to adjacent undisturbed areas as his operations move along. Olmstead also stockpiles organic and vegetative material from the site for re-spreading later, speeding up the revegetation of the disturbed areas.

Due to the short Alaska mining season, Olmstead could not attend a national ceremony for all the winners in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 20, but a local presentation is being arranged for the upcoming Alaska Miner’s Association meeting in November. Olmstead is the first individual miner from Alaska to win the award.

First offered in 2003, the BLM awards are similar to existing Department of Interior awards for excellence in coal mining reclamation. The hardrock mining awards enable the Department of Interior to recognize the industrial and metallic minerals industry as well as sand and gravel operators.

###